1911 - 1961

GOLDEN JUBILEE

OF THE

Piarere School and District

Jubilee Committee

CHAIRMAN: Mr J. G. Arnold.

SECRETARY: Mr C. Duncan.

TREASURER: Mr W. S. Banks.

Members:

Mesdames J. G. Arnold, C. Duncan, E. A. Neill, C. D. Palmer M. Penetito, G. Tu, B. Vosper, J. F. Vosper.

Messrs L. A. Kernot, C. Penetito, I. Puddle, C. Shrimpton, J. F. Vosper, W. N. Vosper, G. R. Webster.

Booklet compiled and edited by Mrs G. R. Webster for the Jubilee Committee.

Programme

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 23, 1962:

8 p.m.—Social and Dance in Piarere Hall.

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24:

AT PIARERE SCHOOL, commencing—

12.30 p.m., Children's Sports

1.30 p.m., Welcome to Visitors.

2 p.m., Roll Call.

2.30 p.m., Group Photograph.

3 p.m., Afternoon Tea and Jubilee Cake.

6.30 - 7.30 p.m., Cocktail Hour.

7.45 p.m., Dinner in Hall.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 25:

Thanksgiving Service in Piarere Hall.

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AUTOGRAPHS

Chairman's Foreword

As Chairman of the Jubilee Committee I have been asked to write a foreword to this booklet.

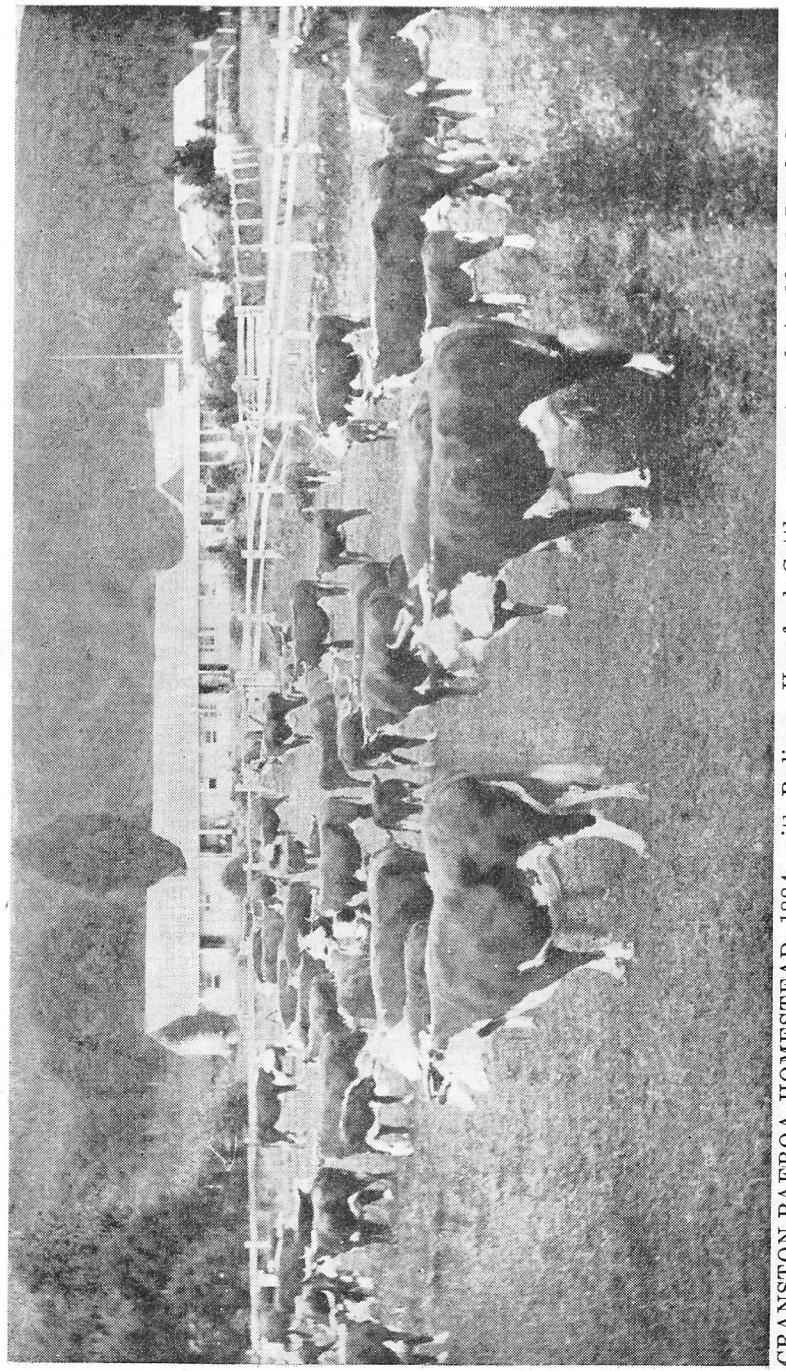
Though this is truly the 50th Anniversary of the School it is hoped that the District will join with us and many old friends and pioneers may have the opportunity of renewing old friendships and bringing old times to memory.

I have travelled in many parts of New Zealand and feel this is one of the most productive as well as picturesque districts to be found, and am proud to join with all who have been associated with its progress.

I would like to thank all those who have been connected with the preparations of the Jubilee and have striven to make it a success, and also those who have helped with the many pages of information that have gone to make this booklet.

To all present goes a sincere welcome. To those who have returned to join in our Jubilee, may your reunion bring happy memories and help us to go into the future with renewed vigour in the hope that Piarere may continue to hold its place in this thriving area.

JOHN G. ARNOLD,
Chairman Jubilee Committee.



CRANSTON-PAEROA HOMESTEAD, 1884, with Pedigree Hereford Cattle, property of Auckland Land Company

Piarere — Hinuera Valley

The entrenchments on the hills surrounding the Hinuera Valley are a tangible reminder of the many generations of Maori tribes who tilled the soil, hunted in the virgin bush and warred against their enemies in this district. The original inhabitants were the Kahupungapunga who were thickly settled from Maungatautari to Atiamuri.

This tribe was a section of the Maruiwi people whom the Fleet Maoris found in large numbers and are now extinct, having been absorbed into the Maori tribes. About 1600 A.D., with the descendants of the Tainui canoe encroaching eastwards from Kawhia, these people were no match for the warlike newcomers who in time overcame them and built pas to occupy the land.

In the 1820s (driven inland by the Ngapuhi), the coastal tribe Ngati Maru of Thames established themselves in what is now the Matamata district and then occupied the lands of Ngati Raukawa at Maungatautari and Patetere. Ngati Raukawa had gone south to join Te Rauparaha.

By 1830 Te Waharoa had raised his own small tribe, Ngati Haua, into conquerors of other tribes. Having defeated the Ngati Maru he settled at Matamata and established his relatives, the Ngati Koroki at Maungatautari.

From that time this valley became known to pakeha travellers as they journeyed between the Waikato and the East Coast.

In 1834 Rev. A. N. Brown (who later was in charge of the first Mission Station at Matamata), in company with Rev. Henry Williams made his second visit from the North to Matamata. Travelling this time by way of Ngaruawahia, Te Awamutu and Maungatautari he reached the Waikato River at Horahora. He made his crossing by a fallen tree which bridged the narrow gap at Aniwaniwa where far below the turbulent river roared through the gorge.

In his Journal he records: "For several miles we were walking through a singularly romantic valley whose shelving sides, rising to 100 feet above our heads were so steep and even that they looked like a succession of well-formed ramparts. Some distance further on the valley was lined with basaltic pillars placed with the same regularity." This is probably the first written description of the district.

In 1835 Ngati Koroki of Maungatautari had announced their intention of travelling through the valley to Tauranga to trade their flax for muskets and gun powder. This did not suit Te Waharoa who said that he would fire on them if they attempted to pass through Matamata.

Rev. A. N. Brown again made history when on Aug 4, 1835 he came from Tauranga in an effort to prevent war between the tribes. Standing upon a boulder on a promontory of the land now owned by Mr C. Duncan, he faced the armed warriors of Ngati Koroki and persuaded them to return peacably to their homes.

In January, 1842, Mr William Colenso, Missionary and Explorer, in the course of one of his excursions passed through the Valley and described it fully in his Journal. Of the Aniwaniwa Crossing he wrote: We found a rude bridge thrown across at a place where the river was very narrow, being confined within a sandstone channel through which it rushes with fearful velocity, eddying and foaming, and carrying everything before it.

"The sandstone rocks on either side, through the softness of the stone and the continual working of the waters, were fretted into a thousand fantastic shapes."

Bishop George Selwyn also travelled through and states in his Letters that on December 24, 1842 he crossed the noble Waikato River by a native pig-bridge composed of two trees with a hollow wattle of brushwood in the middle.

Scotsman's Cap, where Firth's Road left the Hinuera Valley

Dr John Johnson—New Zealand's first Colonial-Surgeon—crossed the river in January 1847 on his way to the Hot Lakes District. He wrote that the natives had thrown a canoe, with its bottom made level, across the gap and that served as a bridge. By then the natives were in the habit of exacting a toll from pakeha travellers, which they fixed arbitrarily.

In the late 1860s Mr J. C. Firth, working his estate at Matamata was prevented the use of the Waihou River by the native owners of the land through which it ran. He was compelled to build the first road to be constructed in this part of New Zealand—a route to Cambridge giving access to his huge holding.

All available men were set to the task and in 6 weeks a good dray road was completed. It entered the hills from the Hinuera Valley (about one mile from the present Maori Cemetery), passed below a peculiar rock formation known as "Scotsman's Cap," climbed up over a ridge past Round Bush through the country now farmed by the Vosper family, down the other side, over a punga filling across a swamp on what is now Mr C. D. Taylor's farm to the hill where Taotaoroa Road runs today.

Apart from the area retained by the Ngati Haua, the land adjacent to the present Hinuera Valley was part of the Matamata Estate.

While Mr J. C. Firth was developing this estate, another series of estates had come into being. The Auckland Land Company represented in the Waikato by McLean and Company, with Captain Bailey and Mr Every McLean as partners, had its headquarters at Fencourt. Between 1876 and 1877 the Company acquired extensive properties. Parts of the Waipa Block of 8,863 acres were the Cranston and Paeroa Estates which extended from what is now the farm of Mr Keith Watkins, almost to Arapuni.

The Cranston (later Paeroa) homestead, was built about 1880—long building in 3 sections, a verandah right along the front. The stone kitchen at the end was rather a gloomy structure but it was more than a kitchen, being constructed to serve as a blockhouse in necessity. The wooden structure was destroyed by fire about 1930 but part of the old stone kitchen is still retained in Mr Watkins' cottage. The track to the Waikato River crossing at Aniwaniwa went by the Homestead and except for the gates was almost a public highway.

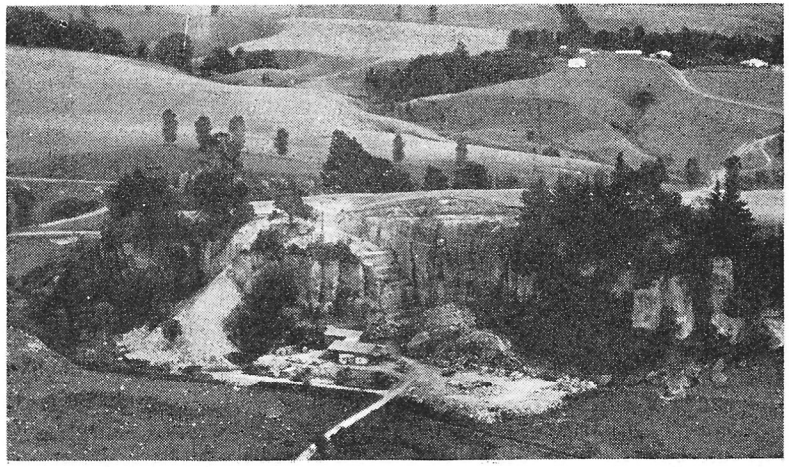
Despite opposition from the Maoris, in 1880 McLean and

Company built a bridge across the gorge at Aniwaniwa, to give access to their Horahora Estate over the river. In 1881 there was a further dispute and by the order of Chief Te Ngakau the bridge was burned. However, not long aftrwards Colonel W. C. Lyon, Chief of Constabulary at Cambridge, arrived with an escort remonstrated with the culprits and told them that the pakeha had the backing ofthe law. This was the end of the incident and the last, accompanied by force, by Maoris within this area.

At the northern end of the district 1100 acres were bought about 1890 bv Mr J. S Browne, whose interest was the Waikato Timber Company, milling at Waotu. The eight roomed house of kauri and pine which he built and furnished for the sum of £300—now the home of Mr and Mrs E. A. Neill—is the oldest standing house in the district.

The depression of the late 1880s was the cause of the failure of many great estate owners. It was necessary for the banks to take over and the Assets Realisation Board was formed with managers appointed to supervise the Estates.

In the early 1900's the 42,841 acres planned for the Matamata Settlement were acquired by the Government from the Assets Realisation Board. The Hinuera Valley portion of the old Matamata Estate was included in this area, which was surveyed and divided into 117 farms and suburban allotments and offered for lease in perpetuitv. A grazing run of 2,956 acres was also offered.



Source of Hinuera Building Stone

On June 2, 1904, at the Sailors' Mission Hall in Auckland, the actual ballot of the land was held. Applicants for the farms were required to deposit the half-year's rental plus £1 1s Lease Fee and attend in person at the Land Board meeting at the District Lands and Survey Office in Auckland.

Annual rentals of the dairy farms in the Valley varied from 2/9 to 5/- per acre or £34 to £56 plus interest half yearly. Two suburban allotments adjoining the side for the proposed creamery were of three and four acres at 5/6 per acre—half yearly rental 10/2 and 11/6.

On the farm now owned by Mr I. Oliver there was a cottage originally used by the shepherd-manager for this area of the Matamata Estate, and that increased the value of the farm by £80.

As there were few seekers of these sections in the Ballot each obtained what he wanted.

The 2,956 acre grazing run on Taotaoroa Road was leased for 21 years at 3d an acre. It was taken by Mr I. Campbell, who built the house (now the home of Mr G. R. Webster), as homestead for the block, which became known as Campbell's Run.

The following years opened a new era with the settlement of the district as farms became established and put into production.

By 1910 the Skimming Station, or Creamery as it was known, and the house for the manager, Mr Dent, were built on the allotted site (now occupied by the Piarere Service Station).

The cream was taken to Hinuera railway station by a contractor with his wagon and horse team. (For years, Mr Bill Anderton was a familiar figure). From 1910 to 1912 the cream was railed to the factory at Frankton Junction. From 1913 to 1916, to Ngaruawahia.

Some big herds were milked to supply the creamery, and Messrs Jas. and Murdoch Anderson, Sefton Banks. C. Penetito, J.Holwell, G. W. Vercoe, W. F. Vosper, H. Wyatt and Wm. Wright were among the first suppliers.

With the introduction of separators on the farms the skimming station ceased to operate. After World War I other contractors transported the cream to factories at Tirau, Waharoa and Hinuera.

From the horse-drawn wagons struggling along a track through 12ft high manuka progress has been made to the streamlined tankers which today speed along the best County roads in New Zealand to collect the whole milk from the milking shed vats of stainless steel.

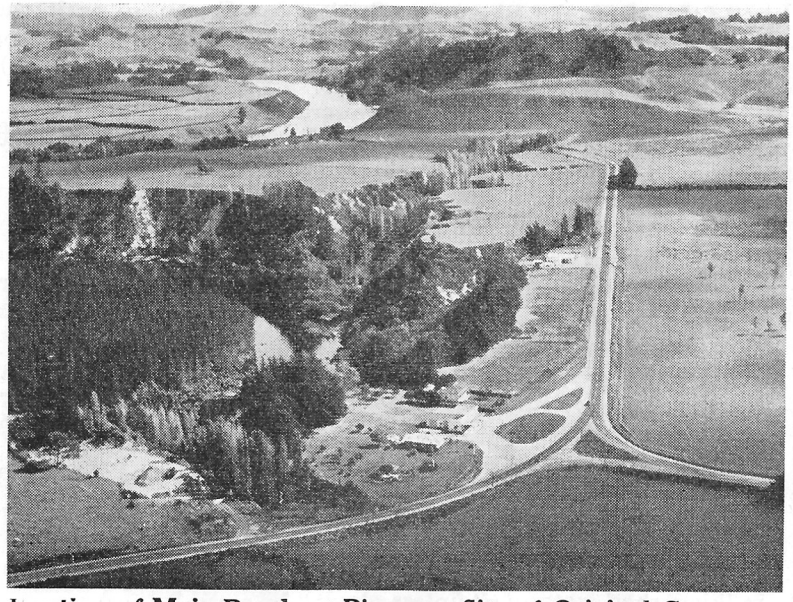
Mail

In the early days of settlement residents took turns to collect the mail once a week from the Hinuera Post Office. It was left in boxes at Mr Wright's (now Mr I. Oliver) gate and at the creamery for further collection.

In 1913 a Post Office was established at the house of the creamery manager and Mrs Dent was postmistress, relieved at times by the Misses Holwell.

In 1914 the Post Office was shifted to an iron shed just inside Captain Holwell's (now Mr Ron Watkins) gate and Miss Eve Holwell (now Mrs Spencer White) became postmistress. Mail was delivered each afternoon by horseback or gig from Tirau after the arrival of the Rotorua Express from Auckland and the Post Office was open fom 4.30 to 6 p.m.

About June, 1914, a Telephone Bureau, connected with Cambridge Exchange, was installed at Captain Holwell's house and the district was then named Piarere after the Piarere Stream. After a new Post Office was opened in Tirau, Captain Holwell acquired 24 old Private Boxes and they were set up at Piarere. Having fulfilled the local need the Post Office was closed about 1920 and the Rural Delivery from Tirau was introduced.



Junction of Main Roads at Piarere—Site of Original Creamery

HORAHORA POWER STATION

The harnessing of the Waikato River at Hora Hora for power by the Waihi Gold Mining Company took place about 1909. There was tremendous traffic through the Valley and from Tirau and down the hill past Paeroa Homestead. Along the roads the bullock teams toiled with heavy loads and in the summer time, traction engines hauled the heavy machinery required for the station. In wet weather the roads were a quagmire and the towering manuka which bordered them was cut and used extensively for filling.

After completion the Station provided power for the Waihi mines until 1919 when it was acquired by the State. Its capacity was 6300 kilowats. The power was then extended to the Waikato dairy factories.

When the power station was built at the Aniwaniwa Crossing a wooden bridge with high sides, painted red, was erected across the Waikato River about two miles downstream to provide access from Piarere to Maungatautari.

In April 1947, after the new hydro-electrical power station at Karāpiro was completed, the level of the Waikato River rose to form a lake and the familiar landmarks at Hora Hora were submerged in its depths.

One interesting item of salvage by the County Engineer, was this old red bridge which was detached at each end, fitted with floats and as the lake rose, floated to the shore to be dismantled for further use. A modern concrete structure which was built directly over the red bridge, now spans the lake, when once a tree trunk was sufficient to bridge the gap at Aniwaniwa.

CHURCH SERVICES

Church services were held in the various homes prior to 1911, conducted by a Home Missionary from Matamata and even later a Minister would come from Cambridge to perform marriage ceremonies. After 1911 services were held in the new School. At that time Miss F. Wright (the first school teacher) provided the accompaniment for the singing of hymns, on a little harmonium of uncertain vintage which had at first been loaned to her by Mr Ellis of Cambridge for social service among the workers at Hora Hora Power Station. Services continued to be held in the school at intervals until the 1950s,

GYMKHANA

In 1944, a meeting of 15 men decided to arrange a Gymkhana on Mr J. B. Arnold's farm in an effort to raise money for patriotic purposes. Everybody in the district co-operated to make a successful venture. A working bee spent three days cutting rails in the bush and the ground was prepared for the great day.

All prizes for the events were donated, a saddle was raffled and realised £20, the local ladies supplied afternoon tea and as a result the takings were £200. Thus began an annual event which has placed Piarere on the map for horse lovers throughout the Province.

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HINUERA STONE

This stone, known as Vitric Tuff, which is such a prominent feature of the Valley is now famed as a building material. In the 1880's it was used in the construction of the Roman Catholic Bishop's Court in Ponsonby, Auckland.

In 1935 stone on the Vosper Estate was split for the building of Mr G. Vosper's house at Maungatautari and later for Mr S. Parkinson's house at St. Helier's, Auckland and the facing of the Hamilton Post Office.

As the cost of quarrying was found to be impractible as a commercial project, the stone remained inviolate for many years. In 1950, Mr S. Parkinson made a trip to the U.S.A. and found that a revolution in stone cutting had taken place. As a result, in 1954, Parkinson's Building Stone Co. Ltd was formed and in 1955 the quarry was opened with the most modern methods of cutting installed. Production (now in the vicinity of 1000 yards a month), was achieved at a fraction of earlier costs. Among the notable buildings in many parts of New Zealand in which the stone has been used for construction are: Dilworth School Chapel, Mt. Maunganui Church of England, Te Awamutu Presbyterian Church, Magistrate's Court, Tokoroa; Government Buildings, Rotorua; Tauranga Telephone Exchange.

PIARERE HALL

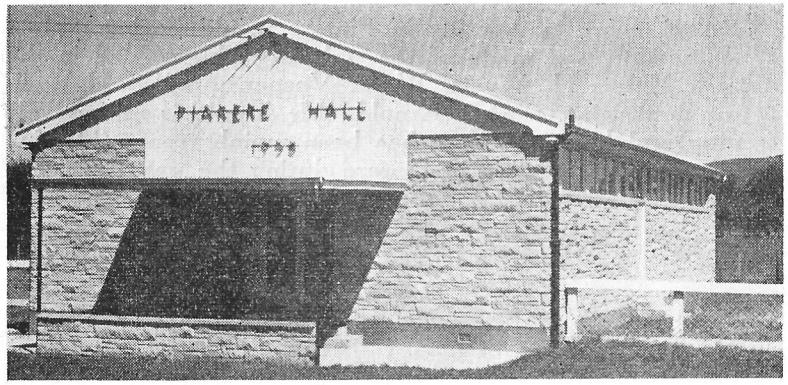
Over the years the Schoolroom had always been the centre of District activities and many happy social gatherings were held there, with the Schoolhouse as nursery and kitchen. With the advent of a second and larger classroom in 1949 the kitchen problem was solved but by 1957 the district had outgrown the Schoolroom and felt the need of a hall.

A district meeting was convened for August 27, 1957 when 36 residents showed their interest by attending. An offer to canvas the district was accepted. The response was generous more than £2000 being promised as well as donations in kind.

At a district meeting on April 14, 1958, it was decided to accept the tender of Messrs C. and M. McKenzie Ltd. for the building of the Hall in local stone. The cost of this was in excess of funds raised, so the County Council was approached for a loan to be repaid by Special Rate

This proposal was accepted by the County and a rating area formed with the hall being vested in the County Council. By November a £4000 hall worthy of the district was completed and the official opening ceremony, was performed by the Hon. W. T. Anderton, M.P. on November 14, 1958.

The hall has been a great asset to the district during the past three years, being used regularly for school functions, indoor bowls, club meetings and dances, the most successful of these being the first Piarere Settlers' Ball in May, 1961.



Piarere Hall

THE HUNT

As might be expected in a district where the saddle horses were in constant use, there has always been a number of keen hunting enthusiasts.

The picturesque countryside with its wide valley, rolling hills and almost unlimited area, lends itself admirably to the sport.

In the late 20's the hounds made their earliest visits to the district and from then on hunted more or less regularly until World War II when the club went into recess. During those earlier years there was ample cover and many hares—in fact at times, the number of hares proved an embarrassment. This being so, it was not surprising that hunting was popular with followers and spectators alike.

After World War II hunting was restarted with enthusiasm and Piarere had as many as three meets in a season. As time went on, hunting conditions changed somewhat. The sheep country became more heavily stocked, the dairy farms were sub-divided and many paddocks of valuable winter-saved pasture were closed. Furthermore, the number of followers had greatly increased and fields from 80 to 120 horses were not uncommon.

To add to these difficulties, the number of hares was greatly reduced while the increase of fast traffic on the modern bitumen road through the valley now made the crossing of the road, at one time an exciting double, an extreme hazard.

Over the years scores of qualifying hunters have followed the hounds in this district, many of them reaching the top flight and later winning the best jumping races in the Dominion.

The record of hunting in Piarere would be incomplete if no mention was made of the stalwarts who resided in the district. Messrs H. Wyatt, W. F. Vosper, Findlay Holwell, Sefton Banks and John B. Arnold. Mr Arnold is still actively hunting and his enthusiasm has been mainly responsible for keeping the sport alive in Piarere during the past 18 years.

History of the School

As the Education Board have no records of the School prior to 1918, and as the School Committee minutes prior to 1931 cannot be located, this survey is limited.

On August 1, 1911, on one acre of ground, the 15ft 4in x 14ft 8in schoolroom with porch and shelter shed, known as Hinuera Valley opened with Miss Florence Wright as teacher and the following pupils:

Frances Anderton, Dorothy Campbell, Elizabeth Leila Halford, Annie Maud Thompson, Kate Evelyn Thompson, Edith Irene Smith, Ethel May Smith, Edward Anderton, Charles Allan Bowler, David Campbell, Kenneth Wallace.

These pupils enrolled during the first month:

Eileen Lily Dobbs, Elizabeth May Doyle, Annie Mildred Smith, James Doyle, Findlay Holwell, John Talbot Wright,.

As the Roll increased to 16 girls and 19 boys, on July 4, 1918, application was made for additions to the school and at the same time the Committee wished the name of the school to be changed to Piarere.

In December 1918, application was sought for the acquisition of one and a half acres of land. Approval was given.

The additions were completed in 1920, when the original building was extended by 14 ft to its present length. In September 1929, the roll had increased to 46 and a lady teacher, Miss L. R. Sleep was appointed as assistant to Mr G. B. Oldfield —a curtain divided the schoolroom into two sections.

In February 1946, application for further additions and approval was given. However, it was not until tremendous efforts, involving School Committee, parents and local Member of Parliament had been made, that ultimately the new block was erected within six weeks and opened late in 1949.

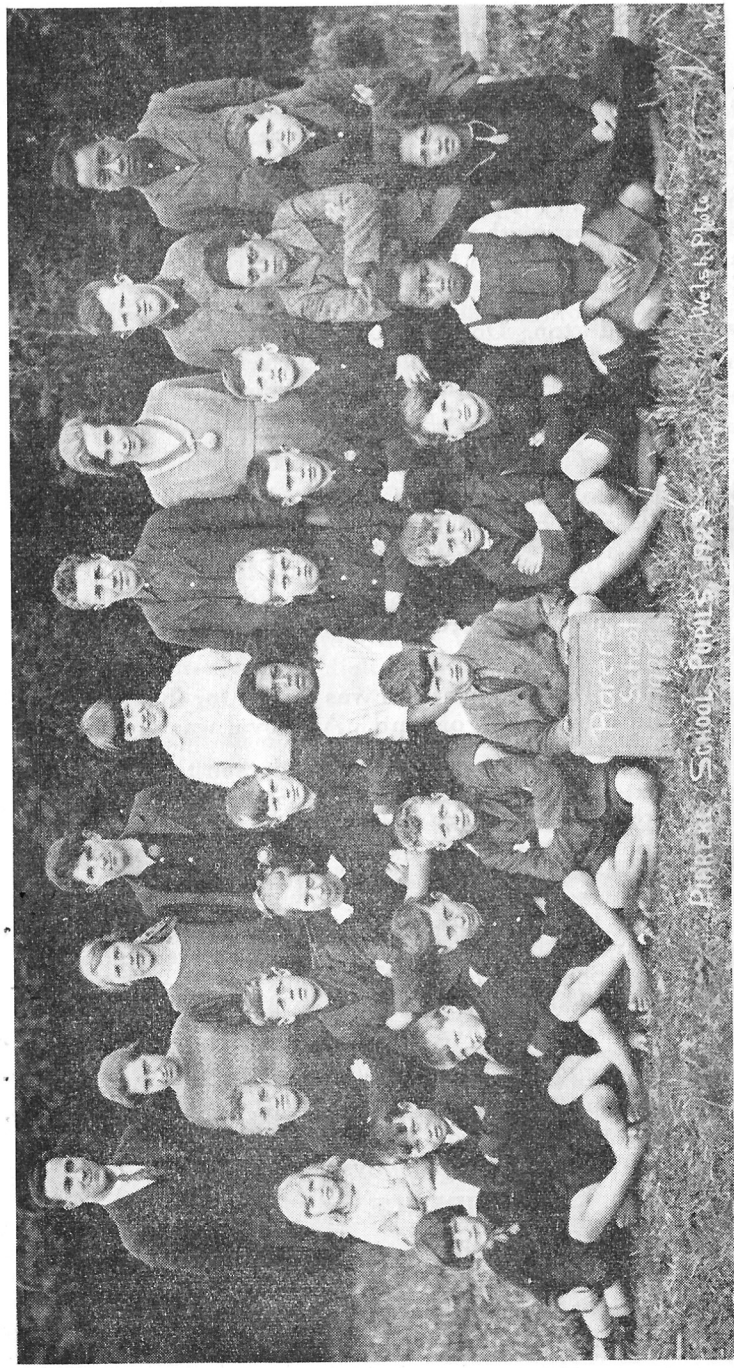
(At that time 22 young children were crammed into the original school house which was used as a classroom—with some seated only three feet from the blackboard.)

Today the roll is 40 girls, 25 boys, 2 teachers.

RESIDENCE

In the early years the teachers showed the true pioneer spirit in their accommodation problems.

Miss F. Wright, sole teacher for the first two years of school history, lived in a tent next to the creamery and some



Back row: Mr Carpenter, Ada Amundsen, Ransyl Kemp, Harold Tinkler, Tosti Banks, Jim Fell, Lurline Runciman, Alan McDonald, George Te Hou.
Middle row: Muriel Runciman, Martin Fell, George Fell, Jean Kemp, Brian Banks, Barley Graham, Malcolm Barnard, Alan Runciman, Neville Runciman, Sonny Penetito, Joe Feisst.
Front row: Irene Carlson, Alan Watkins, Ron Watkins, Laurie Amundsen, Alec Fell, Sefton Banks, Bert Fell,, Owen Tinkler, Martha Te Hou, Pai Wilson.

succeeding teachers also lived in tents, as board and lodging was not always available.

About 1922 an application to the Education Board for the erection of a small residence resulted in a two-room portable house 10ft 4in x 15ft 7in being built on the property of Mr H. R. Lang (now Mr R. Reeve's).

About 1924 it was settled on the school site and a corrugated iron fence built round it. This building still stands in the Schoolhouse grounds and was certainly a very cramped dwelling for the married couple who lived in it.

The little original house was made into a girls' shelter shed and also served at times as an extra classroom.

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TEACHERS

1911 - 1913	Miss F. M. Wright
1913 - 1914	Mr A. H. Jeffs
1915 - 1917	Miss Val A. Peters
1917 - 1918	Miss E. I. Casley
1918 - 1919	Mr Thos. J. Reed
1920 - 1922	Miss E. E. Bryan
1922 - 1923	Mr P. J. Paterson
1924 - 1926	Mr Chas. K. Carpenter
1926 - 1941	Mr G. B. Oldfield
1942 - 1948	Mr L. G. Chaplin
1948 - 1949	Mr W. S. Bestic
1950 - 1951	Mr W. A. Findlay
1952 - 1959	Mr J. Sparks
1960 - 1961	Mr I. Puddle

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ASSISTANTS

1929 -	Miss L. R. Sleep
1930 - 1932	Miss I. G. Carder
1933 -	Miss N. M. Maud
1945 - 1947	Miss K. M. Struthers
1947 - 1949	Miss B. J. Hyde
1950 - 1951	Mrs H. E. Findlay
1952 -	Miss J. C. M. Quinlan
1953 - 1954	Miss J. Allen
1955 - 1956	Miss N. Scott
1959 - 1960	Miss N. White
1961 -	Miss B. Fulton

Mr G. W. B. OLDFIELD

The appointment of Mr G. W. B. Oldfield in 1926 commenced an era of service which enriched the school and community. For 15 years "Oldy," as he was called by pupils when he was not around, and his wife with untiring zeal succeeded in creating a never-to-be-forgotten fellowship in the schoolroom, field of sport and social life of the district.

SCHOOL COMMITTEES

From the beginning the school has been fortunate in the sterling qualities of its committeemen—at times they have been just a few stalwarts but what they have achieved through the years has been for the benefit and welfare of the children.

MR J. W. ANDERSON

A special mention of Mr J. W. Anderson is justified. In 1904 he settled in the Hinuera Valley and for 37 years he served the district. He was a Commissioner for the school for many years. A true gentleman, he was never too proud to perform the most menial tasks in connection with the school and grounds, and although he remained a bachelor, his interest never faltered. His capabilities and energies extended beyond this area and for 28 years he was chairman of the Matamata County Council.

School and Pupils, 1918

CHAIRMEN

	Mr J. W. Anderson
1922 -	Mr H. R. Lang
1931 - 1934	Mr S. Banks
1934 -	Mr W. B. James
1934 - 1938	Mr R. H. de Luen
1938 - 1940	Mr Martin Lyall
1940 - 1942	Mr I. Oliver
1942 - 1950	Mr J. B. Arnold
1950 - 1955	Mr E. A. Neill
1955 - 1957	Mr I. Shrimpton
1957 - 1959	Mr C. Duncan
1959 - 1961	Mr J. G. Arnold

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SECRETARIES

1918 -	Mr O. C. Cowen
1920 -	Mr J. McKee
1922 - 1933	Mr M. W. Watkins
1933 - 1936	Mr B. Habicht
1936 - 1942	Mr J. B. Arnold
1942 - 1944	Mr I. Oliver
1944 - 1954	Mr C. Duncan
1954 - 1955	Mr I. Shrimpton
1955 - 1957	Mr W. Banks
1957 - 1959	Mr I. Shrimpton
1959 - 1960	Mr B. H. Vosper
1960 - 1961	Mr T. A. Clark

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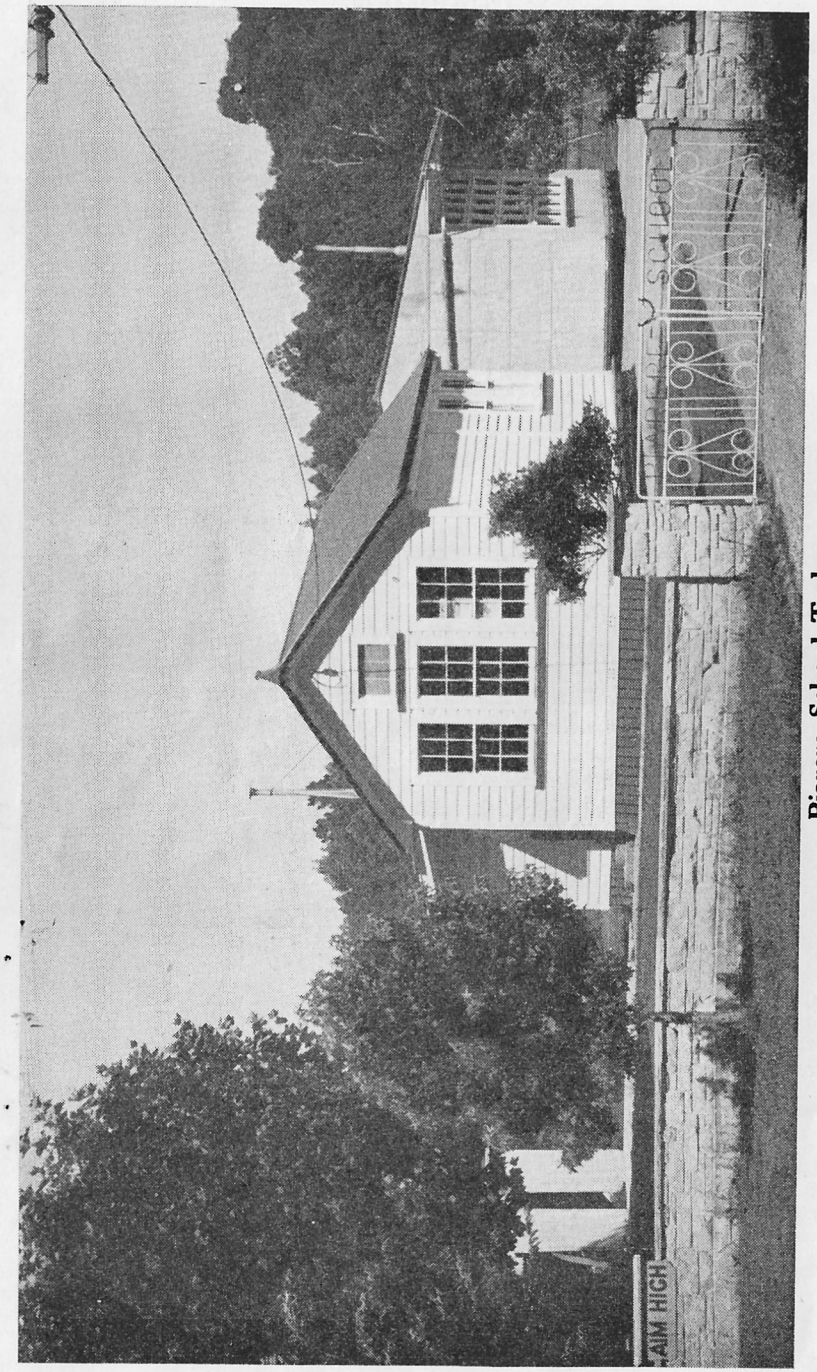
PRESENT COMMITTEE

Chairman: Mr J. G. ARNOLD

Secretary: Mr T. A. CLARK

Members: Mr K. C. Bowden, Mr C. Shrimpton, Mr J. R. Vercoe.

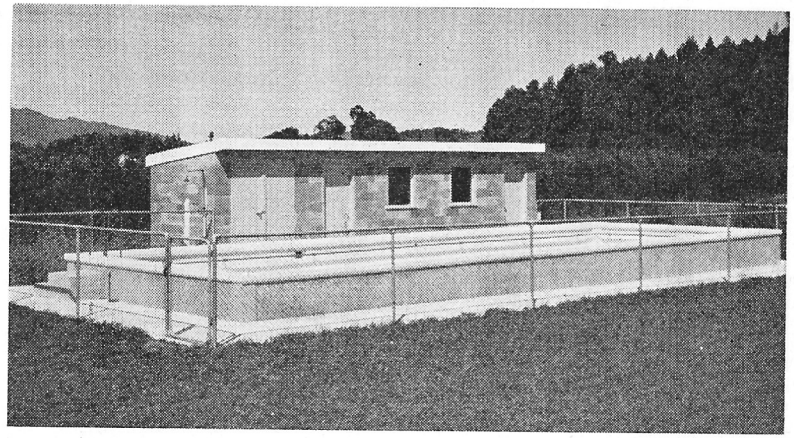


Piarere School Today.

SWIMMING FACILITIES

From the twenties, through the generosity of the Vosper family, the pool on their estate was used for swimming instruction of school pupils and the many pupils who used it succeeded in gaining swimming prowess.

In 1960 an intensive effort was made to raise funds for the building of baths on the school property. The co-operation and generous giving of parents and residents resulted in construction commencing on August 22, when the first sod was turned. With voluntary helpers giving 180 working hours to the contractors and the Government subsidy the 45ft x 15ft pool, filtration plant and dressing sheds were completed. To the great satisfaction of all who assisted, the swimming bath, valued at £1200 was officially opened by Mr G. F. Sim, M.P. on February 10, 1961.



School Swimming Baths

Do You Remember?

The old flax mill where Mr Len Nola's house now stands?

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How it was necessary for the nine suppliers to have the milk at the creamery by 9 a.m. and it was always a race to get there first—horses being urged with shouts and cracking of whips to pull their loads over the rough tracks, which particularly in the early springtime, were a morass.

At the beginning of the season when the supply numbers were allotted the race was even keener. On one occasion the family which was number 9 decided to milk early and become the coveted number 1. They arose by the light of the moon —milked the herd—and the moon still shone.

On checking the time they found it was only 2.30 a.m., so decided to return to bed for a few hours.

Unfortunately, they slept through until 8.30 a.m.—and remained number nine!

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The dances in the kitchens and barns to the music of the accordion. That well known exponent of the instrument, who usually needed the encouragement of two bottles of refreshment, after which he would become drowsy and only wifely nudges would keep him on the job.

? ? ? ?

The time when the baker from Tirau got into difficulties. The wheel of his cart came off when it was bogged in the quagmire of a road—so advising the locals to collect their own bread from the cart, he returned to Tirau on his horse's back.

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How in 1917 during World War I it was necessary for the head teacher to register with the Army Department, all boys attending the school who had attained the age of 14 years on or before 31st May.

? ? ? ?

That wet morning in 1920 when the school children were to go to Hamilton on the occasion of the visit of H.R.H. the Prince of Wales? Mr Bill Anderton set out with his wagon and team of four horses and with Miss E. Bryan, schoolteacher in charge, collected the children from along the Valley.

They were running late for the Express, so galloped the horses to Hinuera and arrived at the station just as the train was departing. Nothing daunted, they decided to catch it at Matamata.

With the children yelling as they sat huddled together with little protection from the pouring rain, they raced along the straight, but what a wail was raised at the station when once more they saw the train depart.

However, Miss Bryan, of indomitable spirit, was not ready to give up. They located the "Pride of Matamata's Taxi Fleet"—three model T Fords—and hiring those, were transported to Hamilton in style. Whose cheers for the Prince were loudest that day?

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The first milking plant installed in the Valley, by Mrs W. Wright at Hilton Downs (now Mr I. Oliver's), in 1917.

? ? ? ?

That there was an aided school in Piarere prior to 1911? This was held in an old house at the rear of Mr Fred Vercoe's home, now the home of Mr I. Oliver. It was opened in 1905 and closed in 1908, being attended by the Vercoe and McDonald families.

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That super 30cwt International truck which Mr Fred Pilcher bought for carting cream? It could reach a speed of 25 miles per hour!

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The thousands of rabbits which infested the district and how a city buyer would come after a mass poisoning and with his team of 20 to 30 men, skin and then bury the carcases.

? ? ? ?

A most successful Gymkhana day was drawing to a close. Profits for the day had been kindly offered by the club to the Hall Building Fund. The majority of the crowd had dispersed. But who had won the weight guessing competition? The prize, a beautiful black lamb. A local resident was the winner.

"Auction it," he said. Away went the auctioneer, and in a matter of a few minutes, almost every man present had bought and sold that lamb, until eventually the first buyer had bought it again. Time to stop. The result, £100 for the building fund. Was there ever such a valuable black lamb?

Autographs

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